

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE RETIREE COUNCIL'S REPORT

1. The one hundred and thirteenth (113) meeting of the Fort George G. Meade Retiree Council was held at building 2234 Huber Road, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland at 9:09AM, 12 September 2009, and in accordance with AR 600-8-7, this report of the meeting is submitted.

a. The following members were present:

COL Bert L. Rice, USA Ret (Chairman)

SGM Kenneth L. McCall, Sr., USA Ret (Co-Chairman)

COL Erwin Burtnick, AUS Ret

COL Edward Uemura, USA Ret

LTC Jeanette Hammond, USA Ret

MAJ William Heath, USA Ret

CW3 Gregory Crites, USN Ret

SGM J. Paul Funk, AUS Ret

SGM James Gilbert, USA Ret

MSG Barbara Barron, AUS Ret

1SG Richard Gillman, AUS Ret

1SG Eugene Johnson, AUS Ret

SFC Robert Caswell, USA Ret

MSGT Charles Plummer, USAF Ret

SSG Walter B. Hollman, Sr., USA Ret

2. The meeting was called to order with a welcome from COL Rice. The invocation was given by SGM McCall, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by SGM Gilbert.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS. COL Rice reviewed the minutes of the Council's meeting of 6 June 2009, with the Council who accepted the minutes unanimously. COL Rice then introduced the following guest:

a. AAFES (John Mendez - General Manager, Vincent James - Store Manager, Deborah Johnson - Sales/Merchandise Manager):

(1) James expressed his appreciation for the support that the military retired community provides the PX. It is outstanding. He also appreciates the feedback that he receives from these meetings. He then reported on the following:

*Fourth quarter sales for the store were very successful.

*Toyland opens on 26 Sep 09.

*Retiree Weekend promotions scheduled for 18 Sep 09.

*Fuel purchased at the AAFES fuel facility will receive a 5 cent per gallon when the Military Star card is used. (COL Rice asked if the fuel sold through the facility is taxed? Yes!)

*Encourages use of the Buddy List (e-mail) because coupons and sales information is disseminated through same. (There is no sharing of information from the Buddy List with outside vendors.)

*Cell phone text coupons and discount information will soon be made available via the phone.

*On-line shopping has increased the products available since AAFES partnered with commercial vendors who will give discounts on their merchandise.

*Burger King restaurant is undergoing an upgrade and service will be limited during this period.

*Car wash still on track and scheduled to open in Oct 09.

(2) Mendez extended his thanks for the Council's involvement and the feedback that they provide. He shared the following:

*A new store is planned for Fort Meade in the vicinity of the current one. It will be larger and offer new outlets, etc.

*The parking of large vehicles at the end of some parking lanes obstructing the view of those vehicle operators trying to make turns to exit those lanes, continues to be a problem. The vehicles parked there are supposed to have permits to be offered for sale. Since many do not have permits and contact information is not available, attempts to contact the vehicle owners have been futile. Some of the owners are manipulating the program by using the area as a free "storage lot" and assistance is needed to correct the problem. (COL Rice stated that he would make the appropriate calls to address this concern.)

*Support of the upcoming Retiree Appreciation Day is on track.

(3) Johnson discussed her role and accepted questions relative to planned merchandise for the store.

NOTE; Gift bags with select items were distributed to all in attendance.

b. Army Community Service (Melodie Menke - Relocation Readiness Program Manager) explained her role with ACS and that her purpose for attending this meeting was to recruit delegates for the Army Family Action Plan Symposium that is to be held at Fort Meade, 30 Sep and 1 Oct 09. She also distributed several handouts that included:

*Training for AFAP Community Symposium (Your Role as a Delegate).

*The Army Family Action Plan (Status of AFAP Issues, Delegates, AFAP Conference Objectives, Guidance for the Week, 2008 Army Family Action Plan Accomplishments). COL Rice provided additional insight relative to the program. SGM McCall asked if the results of the symposium are made a part of the Army Covenant? Ms Menke stated that selected issues submitted Army wide are indeed included in the Army Covenant. Additional discussion followed which included SGM Gilbert citing his role as a facilitator in previous symposiums.

c. MG Boyd Cook Memorial Foundation, Inc. (CSM Bran Thompson, US Army Retired - Foundations representative) was introduced. He distributed an organizational newsletter and stated that the foundation is based in Frederick County, Maryland and works closely with the Fort Detrick "all services retiree council" providing assistance to both active duty and reserve military and their families. He addressed the following as it pertained to the organization:

- *Vision - supporting the needs of US Armed Forces active duty and reserve component veterans and their families at the community level
- *Mission - Identify those in need of assistance that is not available from the Department of Defense or the Veterans Administration.
- *Focus - on the unique needs of the Reserve and Guard components of our Armed Forces and their families, previously or currently serving in the Iraq and Afghan conflicts.
- *Why they provide assistance and how they help.
- *The Foundation is an IRS approved non-profit organization 501 c (3) staffed with volunteers.
- *Identified the Foundations supporting organizations
- *Identified the Foundations web site www.mgbc-md.org.
- *Donations are the life blood of the Foundation.
- *Issued an invitation for our Council to join in the Foundations efforts.
- *Discussed some of the cases that the Foundation has aided.
- *Addressed remarks made by those in attendance

COL Rice thanked him for his presentation and expressed a need for further coordination. Since CSM Thompson sits on the Fort Detrick Retiree Council, he was invited to represent Fort Detrick on the Fort Meade Council (response is pending).

4. RSO Remarks: Mr Ashley reported on the following

- a. The Retired Service Office was in receipt of the Installation Commanders Soaring Eagle Customer Service Award. (Kudos were extended to he and his staff.)
 - b. His absence from the office the next week for he will be TDY attending a retiree conference.
 - c. The latest issue of the Army Echoes had been published.
 - d. Status of the on-going construction at building 2234 Huber Road.
 - e. The mission of ACAP.
 - f. How contractor problems affected the timely mailing of our newsletter (Still Serving) and the steps being taken to rectify future problems. Also, information relative to the 19 June 2010, Retiree Benefits Symposium is contained in the newsletter including a registration sheet.
 - g. Retiree Appreciation Day:
 - *Everything is on track for this event.
 - *Eighteen (18) booths will be manned by KACC personnel and other vendors/organizations.
 - *Door prizes are needed. (SGM McCall requested that those from the Council who will be providing gifts, turn them into him on the morning of the RAD.)
 - *The 3rd Infantry Regiments Drill Team will perform at the Pavilion (weather dependent).
- COL Rice indicated that personnel will be needed to man two (2) sign-in tables. (SGM McCall will coordinate same.)

5. Old Business. COL Rice addressed the following:

- a. The illegal parking of some oversized vehicles in the PX parking lot is being addressed by the Command.
- b. The forthcoming construction relative to the PX and the Commissary.

c. The delay of the proposed construction of a VA clinic at Fort Meade.

6. New Business. COL Rice remarked on several items in Army Echoes that were distributed to the Council

7. APG Update. None, no representative was present.

8. Western Maryland Update. None, no representative was present.

9. Kimbrough Advisory Council (KAC). COL Uemura indicated that the KAC had been restructured and renamed and that Mrs Cecile Morse (Council member) was appointed to same. (COL Rice asked COL Uemura to continue to serve as an alternate to the KAC.) Mrs Morse was not in attendance and a report was not rendered.

10. Fort Meade Commissary Council SGM Funk reported that the previous commissary manager had been promoted to a Regional Director responsible for a number of commissaries. He met with the new manager, Michael Mertz and discussed the following:

- a. Resolution of problems that had occurred in some of the departments.
- b. Preparation for support of the RAD.

11. Army Family Advisory Board. Representative not present.

12. Co-Chairman's Remarks. SGM addressed the following:

- a. He thanked the members of the Council for their continued support to the military retired community and the installation through their service on the Council.
- b. He asked that all who are going to assist at the RAD, be there no later than 7:45AM for a briefing.
- c. BG Wallace, USA Ret, member of the US Army Reserve Employer Partnership Program who spoke at the 21 July 2009 meeting of the Maryland Veterans Commission, sharing information relative to their TELL A VET, initiative in which they are trying to find jobs for veterans. A handout was distributed.
- d. The hospitalization of Senator Barbara Mikulski with a broken leg suffered in a fall.
- e. Distributed copies of The Maryland Veteran newsletter and the Veterans Portal of Care brochure.
- f. The efforts by a committee to reach many of the World War II Liberators to participate in a ceremony on 15 April 2010 at the Capitol, to celebrate The Days of Remembrance Ceremony on its 65th anniversary of the liberation of concentration camps. More information is available at telephone number 202/314-0332.
- g. The Veterans Day Ceremony planned for 11 November 2009, to be conducted at the Maryland Veterans Cemetery in Crownsville, MD. All are invited.
- h. Council Meeting Schedule:
Saturday, 5 December 2009 - Review RAD 2009 program and discuss those entries that have been received for submittal for the Army Chief of Staffs Councils annual meeting in 2010.
Saturday, 6 March 2010 - To be announced.

Saturday, 5 June 2010 - To be announced.

13. Good of the Organization:

- a. COL Rice reported that a MG Roderick Isler, had submitted an interest in serving as the chair of the Fort Meade Retiree Council and has planned to attend the 5 Dec 09 meeting. COL Rice also remarked on a meeting to be held in Howard County on 16 October 2009 that pertained to hiring veterans with disabilities. He also stated that efforts are still underway to obtain tax relief for military retired pay..
- b. LTC Hammond announced that she was appointed a Commissioner on the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home Commission. Kudos were extended.
- c. COL Burtnick stated that the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs had recently appointed Edward Chow as its new Secretary..
- d. SSG Hollman asked for the status of discount passes to parks in Maryland for veterans and military retirees. (To be looked into.)
- e. The PX presented additional gifts.

14. The meeting adjourned at 11:07AM and a reminder was issued relative to the next meeting which will be held at building 2234 Huber Road, Fort Meade, MD, 9AM, 5 December 2009.

BERT L. RICE
COL, USA RET
Chairman, Fort Meade
Retiree Council
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KENNETH L. MCCALL, SR.
SGM, USA RET
Co-Chairman, Fort Meade
Retiree Council